Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-7.   (canceled)

8.   (currently amended) A method for exchanging a network element in a signaling network, comprising:

directing all transaction reports between the network element to be exchanged and the signaling network via the exchange network element, the exchange network element and the network element to be exchanged using the same identifying code;

determining at the exchange network element whether a transaction report arriving from the signaling network is intended for the network element to be exchanged or the exchange network element itself ~~and is decided by the network element to be exchanged~~; and

forwarding the transaction report to the network element to be exchanged for ~~further~~ processing when the transaction report is intended for the network element to be exchanged and otherwise ~~further~~ processing the transaction report in the exchange network element ~~depending on the decision in the network element to be exchanged~~.

9.   (previously presented) The method in accordance with Claim 8, wherein the network elements, on transmission of transaction reports for initiation of functions in another network element transmit an identification code identifying the sending network and transmit a transaction code.

10.   (previously presented) The method in accordance with Claim 8, wherein the transaction code of a transaction code report is registered in the network element.

11.   (previously presented) The method in accordance with Claim 8, wherein the

transaction code of a transaction code report is changed in the network element.

12.   (previously presented) The method in accordance with Claim 8, wherein a transaction code which can uniquely identify the transaction report is issued by a network element for a transaction report.

13.   (previously presented) The method in accordance with Claim 10, wherein a transaction code which can uniquely identify the transaction report is issued by a network element for a transaction report.

14.   (previously presented) The method in accordance with Claim 11, wherein a transaction code which can uniquely identify the transaction report is issued by a network element for a transaction report.

15.   (previously presented) The method in accordance with Claim 8, wherein SS#7 is used as the signaling protocol.

16.   (previously presented) The method in accordance with Claim 8, wherein the part of the signaling protocol used is the part for processing addresses when forwarding a transaction report.

17.   (previously presented) The method in accordance with Claim 8, wherein one of the network elements is specified as a Signaling Transfer Point.